

From The Foothills of
Song

CHARLOTTE MULLEN PACKARD

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Charlotte Mellen Packard was born in Hamilton Ohio, in 1839. Her father is
Rev. Charles Packard, a Congregational minister, with settlements in Hamilton,
Lancaster Mass. Biddeford Maine et al. Charlotte is a member of the College
Church (Congregational) in Brunswick Maine, where she lived many years. She
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English.

From the Foothills of Song

Charlotte Mellen Packard



Boston
Richard G. Badger
The Gorham Press
1908

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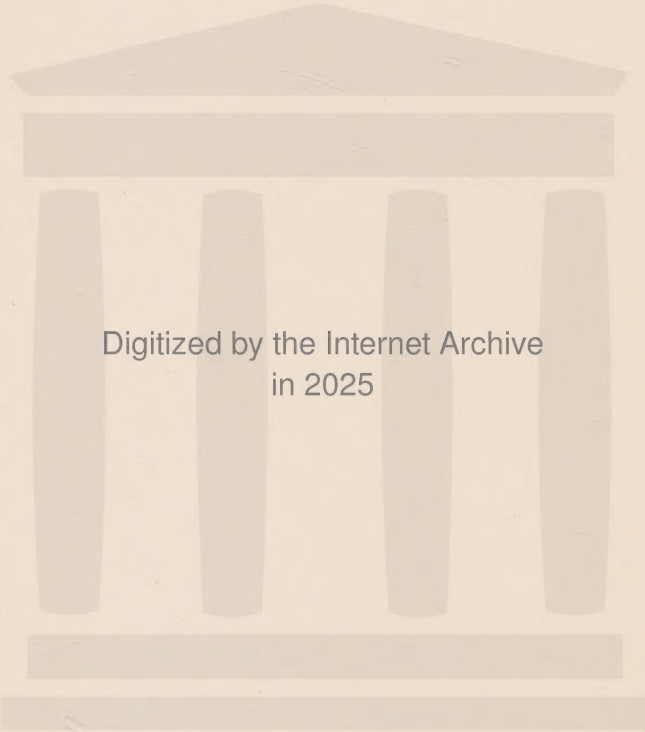
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TO MY MOTHER IN THE UNSEEN

*It is the parting of the ways," you said,
"You will go on alone."
Swiftly between us rose the Silence vast,
With all of the unknown.*

*And since that hour no voice to me has come
To speak you near or far;
Yet, as of old, I bring my offering home
To you — where'er you are.*



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FOREWORD

The verses here first collected have been the occasional work of years. For permission to reprint many which appeared in current magazines and newspapers, the author's thanks are due to the publishers of the *Atlantic Monthly*, the *New England Magazine*, *Lippincott's Magazine*, *The Dial*, *The Congregationalist*, the *Youth's Companion*, the *New York Independent*, and others.

Born amid the Foothills of Song it is hoped that these verses may greet some on their descent from the higher ranges.

C. M. P.

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INSPIRATION

Song is for him who knows not whence it comes,
A gift of the Immortals,—welling through
His spirit, as the rills from mountain homes
Bathe arid channels with their healing dew.

Oft the soul-country lies more desert bare,
Thirsty and fainting, till some heavenly sign
Unlocks the currents held in darkness there
And song sweeps through with cadences divine'

ONE OF MANY

None sought for beauty in that rugged face,
Her form revealed no subtle lines of grace,
But in the quiet of her fearless look
One read the life, as in an open book.

Sorrow had walked with her; she shunned despair.
Love drew the poison from gray thorns of care.
Close to her staff of strength the helpless clung,
While little bells of Hope about them rung.

A lowly woman, on Life's common street,
Where myriads go who never pause to greet,
She has no record in the Hall of Fame,
But lips grow tender as they speak her name.

STORM OF DAWN

Storm of the Dawn upon these hills of God!
Storm of great winds, from hidden caves set free,
Like a retreating army hurtling down
To perish cowardly by land or sea.
Storm of indignant color, beryl, flame,
Bursting above night's gray dissolving walls,
Till as the battlements of day are seen,
The sun-king triumphs and his rival falls.

SONG-CRAFT

How do the wise birds baffle us
Who count ourselves as sage!
The warbler on yon trembling bough,
This prisoner of the cage,
With gleaming crest and mocking eye,
Give to our minstrelsy the lie.

The world is listening yet to hear
The thrush's angel song
Turned to angelic phrase; ah me!
The world will listen long;
For He who made the poet's heart,
Chose for His birds the singer's art.

ENCOURAGEMENT

Are not life's sweet reprisals everywhere?
The rosy dawn creeps over sea and land,
Mantling the houses where gray Death has banned
Light for a season, and against despair
Sets the clear joyance of young children fair.
Though age and dolor wander hand in hand,
Laughter and song the ear cannot withstand.
Want faces Plenty, glad her wealth to share.
What dark abysses rainbow Hope hath spanned!
What cheer Love sheds around the hearth of care!
Could but mine eye perceive life's blended whole—
This is not granted; yet be patient, soul!

THE SUNDAY BEE

She walks before her parents,
The little nut-brown maid,
Although it is the Sabbath day
Her heart is not afraid.

For while unto the meeting house
They go with solemn air,
Gay summer laughs through all the land,
And meets them everywhere.

The meadow path is hidden half
By the sweet clover train,
That nod and swish their honey heads
Like mortals light and vain.

“Remember,” speaks the father,
“This day is not as ours,
And turn your thoughts to better things
Than birds and soulless flowers.

“The Lord, He made them all, but we
Give Him one day in seven.”
A thrush sings from the copse beyond,
Praise meet for highest heaven.

The stile is reached, but ere they climb
To gain the sandy street,
Temptation seizes little Ruth
And clogs her wayward feet.

Pinkest of clover beckons her;
She snatches it in haste,
Then follows where the elders go,
Calm-eyed and heavy-faced.

Within the warm, moist hand, alas!
A sudden, stinging dart.
She stifles back the rising cry
And writhes with anguished smart.

"I plucked it; 'twas the Sabbath day."
There needs no question why
The poor, forbidden flower should wound;
She knows, and tears are dry.

Through the interminable prayer,
Adown "the great discourse,"
One small offender tracks her sin
And suffering to its source.

*"Whoever dares to pick a flower
On this day set apart
Will find a righteous Sunday Be
Hid in its very heart."*

AFTER SNOW

Behold the Pines! like hoary priests they stand
Wearing the white regalia of the storm.
They sigh, and sway themselves to either hand,
Like one whose prayer o'erflows the mould of form.

What lofty commune keeps their leal hearts warm!
They counsel with the ever-shifting clouds;
The elemental secrets are their own;
They bear the swell of ocean in their tone,
And bring to solitude the voice of crowds.

IN THE MIND'S EYE

'I see their unborn faces shine
Around the never-lighted fire.'— *In Memoriam*.

Forever and forever they will shine,
While mocking flames consume
Shadows that lurk about a phantom hearth,
Within a phantom room.

Fond love and fancy paint in rarest tones
The things that shall not be,—
Alluring visions, which the baffled heart
Summons none else to see.

In song-pierced twilight, in the hurrying dark
Of winter afternoons,
In lonely watches of the solemn night,
Beneath warm summer moons,

The life forbidden sways the life that is,
Through the one joy we miss —
Husband or wife or child that never came
To take the waiting kiss.

As it hath been it evermore shall be;
With vague, unmet desire,
Men will behold the unborn faces shine
Around an unlit fire!

AT THE BEND OF THE RIVER

What hides the River in its breast ?
Impress of myriad vanished things,
The melting rainbow of its crest,
Soft brooding clouds and flitting wings,
Faces of children looking down
From many a bridge in many a town;
Of lovers leaning cheek to cheek,
When words are all too cold and weak;
Wan visages where toil and sin
Their heavy lines have graven in;
Quick joyous crews with dip of oars
Waking light echoes from the shores,
Dropping their music and their glee
Into the River's mystery.

What hides the River in its breast ?
Rich hoardings of the sunset's gold.
Lances of moonlight laid in rest
Between the velvet shadows' fold.
Soft pencillings of wind-tossed flowers
Fringing its banks in summer hours;
Of sombre pines that darkly brood
In some unbroken solitude,
Or lady birches, straight and pale
As novice wrapped within her veil,
Longing her mirrored face to see
Whate'er the penances may be!

Far other secrets, gruesome, sad,
The glittering River subtly hides,
Like an o'er-burdened spirit, glad
To merge its woe in hurrying tides.
Secrets of life, alas! gone down
Into those luring deeps, the crown
Of unpriced treasure, which the River
Steals in its flow and must forever.

AT SHAW'S MONUMENT

His name with the Immortals swiftly set,
Needs not this granite lest the world forget.
The easeful world, in moments high and just,
Thus seals its faith in virtue so august.

THANKSGIVING

One thanks his God he knows not sorrow's touch;
One for the sure increase of honest gain;
One for life's sacred friendships, such — and such!
And one dares thank Him for the scourge of pain.

A WITHERED ROSE

“Dorothy, 17.” Yes, a hundred years ago!
Witness this headstone quaint, with cherubs, a moony row
Grimly the words are set, but their meaning awakes a
 thrill,
And “Dorothy, 17” seems breathing, beautiful, still.
Wrapped in the country peace, brooded by storm and
 shine,
Veiled by the virgin snows or gay with some straggling
 vine,
This grave hath its story told with a simple pathos dumb,
And still to its soft appeal the vagrant fancies come.

Dorothy! fair ancestress hid by the falling years,
From the lost leaf of your being only this line appears,
To hint of that Rose unfolding whose thorns we shall
 never find;
Who names a rose but for sweetness? and Fate is to you
 most kind,

Since ages cannot alter the exquisite gift of youth,
And a maiden of seventeen stands type of the flower, in
 sooth,
In June with the world a blossom (I picture it all to-day),
Your grave in this nook was hallowed and the white Rose
 hidden away!

Mayhap we are kin to spirit, but somehow we love this
flesh,
And earth is more real than heaven when being is young
and fresh,
The wind is sweet on one's forehead, the scent of the
clover dear,
And the kingdom of love and beauty and gladness is now
and here!

To you it may little matter what changes this world hath
seen,
How the planet swings into winter, and from winter to
April green;
But the rapture of love untasted a void in your bliss may
be,
And the glance withdrawn from our being left much it
were good to see.

I start, and the bubble Fancy dissolves into golden air;
Again in the ancient graveyard with headstones mossy
and bare
Birds sing, brown bees are humming unmindful of death
or tears,
O Dorothy! take my tribute after one hundred years!

AT MIDSUMMER

For this supernal day,
Let loose thy fettered soul!
Why in such heavy durance stay
When God has given the whole?

At Beauty's lavish board
Let thy starved soul be fed,
Drink thou her golden wine outpoured
And taste her wholesome bread.

Pain is, and sorrow is,
And evil walks in state;
But summer swings the door of bliss,
A glad and gracious fate.

The void thou canst not cure
Cover with healing grass,
Let whispering winds with fingers pure
Anoint thee as they pass.

To thee, by night and day,
A larger mystery calls,
Where Ocean rears from wave and spray
His sheer dissolving walls.

Toiling he chants his rune,
Learned of the elder time
When earth and heaven were still in tune,
The poet's fabled prime.

'Tis thou who must unbind
Thy shackles, or remain
Prisoner of the contracting mind
That courts its cell of pain!

“THE HOUSE ON THE HILL”

When the Soul of it had fled
Why should the House remain ?
To visit it was pain
When the Soul of it had fled.

The swift flames pierced it through,
Poor House! whose soul had fled,
Though wet with memory's dew,
The swift flames pierced it through.

But she, past scathe and scar,
Lives in some other star,
Though fancy throned her still
In the House upon the Hill.

JUNE

The soul of youth, if not in youthful guise,
Fares forth to welcome June, whose wondrous eyes
Deep with all dreams, yet brimmed with laughter
sweet,
The yearly miracle of charm repeat.

Lightly she comes across the fields of Morn,
Her singing robes by laughing nymphs outborne,
Love's roses into bloom before her break,
The silent choirs of earth and air awake.

Hers was the touch that from their sleep unsealed
Fountains of feeling, scarce to self revealed,
Tremors of being, joy of sharpened sense,
As from the spirit falls some dull defense.

Yet even as we worship, she has flown;
No yearning lover calls the maid his own.
Still moving on to an enchanted tune,
Echo prolongs for her our "June! ah, June!"

A LEGEND FROM THE TALMUD

The patriarch Abram sat in his tent door
Waiting the guest whom God perchance would
send

To ask an alms from his abundant store,
Or timely shelter, given as to a friend.

The cool wind lifting carelessly his hair
Stirred to new thankfulness his soul serene,
When looking up, one waiting halted there
Whose shadow trembled on the earth, I ween;

An old, old pilgrim, leaning on his staff,
With vision dim returned his asking gaze,
His story in his aspect written half,
And half rehearsed in slow, uncertain phrase.

The Father of the Faithful welcomed him,
Bathed the tired feet and proffered wine and bread.
Looking to trace, e'en in that visage grim,
A grateful soul bent to the Hand that fed.

Yet blessing none escaped the famished lips,
This heathen beggar knew no god but Fire.
So charity was lost in swift eclipse
And Abram cried in his exceeding ire:

“I cast thee out, ungrateful, to partake
Of the great desert's shelter, that the night,
Darkening around, thy graceless soul may shake;
Since He is in the dusk as in the light!”

.

But the Lord called to Abram in his sleep.
"How petty thy impatient soul appears,
Unwilling for a single night to keep
Whom God hath suffered, lo! these hundred
years!"

THE THINGS OF OTHERS

Burdened I woke in the morning
With a heavy sigh and a start;
Ah, why of life's many prizes
Held I so small a part?

But when I lay down at evening
I questioned the will divine,
Why my neighbor's sudden anguish
Had not instead been mine.

MORNING

Inland

A bright lance broken in the oak's live heart;
A shallow pool of gold beside my door;
A bird essaying first his untried part
In nature's boundless score.

A coil of smoke that vainly tries to rise,
And hangs, unhelped, midway the humid air:
A drowsy teamster straightening as he cries,
"The day, I think, is fair!"

By The Sea

Sun-smitten fogs that are thinning and drifting away,
Then an amethyst sea creeping up like a child from his
play
To the sheltering arms of the rocks and the warm mother-
breast
Of the sand, with a sibilant laugh, the wild truant
confessed.

PERDITA

You cry your posies o'er again
 Whene'er the Master's page we scan;
Your lips wreathe with that light refrain
 Still shyly sweet to man.

For you the honeyed summer pours
 Her warmth into the variant March;
Yet all the dainty spring is yours —
 Shy, debonair, and arch.

How live you safe from every harm,
 Perdita, though earth's blossoms fall,
And centuries of youth and charm
 Time weaps within his pall,

To smile and cry your garden hoard,
 Rathe violets and daffy's gold,
Ah, how ? but that the Master's word
 Forbids you to grow old.

THE ORGAN GRINDER

Through country ways the swart itinerant plods
A protean shape, the same yet not the same,
Appearing year by year as birds return,
Like them departing with the autumn's chill.
Village and straggling town and lonely farm
Give him fair welcome, whom the city scouts.

I hear afar the sweetly piping strain
Entreating, "Hear me, Norma!" who hears not,
Forever obdurate to wild appeal.
The rustic people pause anon to catch
The untranslated passion of the song,
Then clamor for the last camp-meeting air,
Or cheer again brave "Johnnie, marching home."

Upon the grinder's steps the children tread,
Wide-mouthed and eager, if his blouse betrays
Some red-capped sharer of his gipsy life,
With simian face that travesties his own,
The painful lines of both inscrutable.

My petty silver lights the gloom with smiles.
He bows and murmurs more than English thanks,
Resumes his load, and moves away till lost
In clouds of dust? Of glory? Who shall tell?
Do any hear him speak of common things?
Will he forever make his droning round
To shame the dryness of New England thrift?

AS HE GOES

There needs no painter's brush to fix the scene,
The gray old house, held in its sheath of green,
The far blue mountains, the near laughing stream,
What the boy leaves will be his manhood's dream.

How can he go ? Alas, how can he stay ?
Life thrills his pulses with its keen "Away!"
Yet the home voices never were so dear —
He knows the world is hard, well may he fear.

His chamber walls with motley treasures hung —
Each trivial thing has found a wiling tongue.
They speak the strenuous joys by stream and wood,
Or schoolroom triumphs, all with charm endued.

Lo! at his feet a sudden breeze has cast
An empty nest, he rouses him at last;
The pining hunger is for them who stay,
Listening in vain for sturdy feet that stray.

The jovial call of one who urges speed
Is heard without, the time is come, indeed!
The gates swing open, shut with clamorous noise,
Home is behind with memories and joys.

COMPAGNONS DU VOYAGE

Old comrades are we, silent Pain!
My steps on thine do sometimes gain,
Till, loitering in the mellow sun,
I dream thy secret course is run:
Then dies my heart with sudden fear.
Friend! Comrade! Foe! 'tis thee I hear,
My hand in thine is clasped anew
And we our destined course pursue.

Beside me on the road I trace
Footsteps that have not caught thy pace,
They pass with joy's unwasting tread,
By fruit and blossom comforted.
Mortals whom Hope hath not betrayed,
Or loss and failure sore dismayed,
Methinks their light and silvery speech
Shames the sharp discords thou dost teach.

Yet by my sharpened sense I know
The solitary way I go
Is crowded thick with souls that strain
Like mine, to foil or distance pain.
I see them in the starless night
Beckon the herald of the light;
I hear them in the golden day
For night and healing shadows pray!

So move we to the veiled end,
Whom Pain or Pleasure doth attend.
O'er each the steadfast planets burn;
O'er each the guiding Love doth yearn.
Is the thorn mine? The rose for thee?
Who fathoms what our best may be?
One journey ours by night and day,
One goal,— but ah, the different way!

AT HAWORTH

AN INTERIOR

Gray daylight filtering through a chilly room;
Without, the moor, the churchyard's warning
gleams;

Within, the wondrous sisters cheating Fate,
Warmed by the witch fires of their glowing dreams.

How noiselessly through the well-ordered place
Fancy her shuttle flings! each girlish head
Bent o'er the loom where grows her own design
As doubt and fear and rapture twine the thread.

Afar the unknown world unknowing waits,
With Fame reluctant to bestow her bays.
No forecast shows the pilgrims who shall come,
To laud and mourn them in the unborn days.

AN ANNIVERSARY

Across the field there comes to me
The pleasant sound of lads at play;
Oh, for those other lads who once
Marched in the ranks away!

Far off and dim their lives appear
To these inheritors of peace,
As any fabled heroes wrought
Into the tales of Greece.

Far off and dim — unto my heart
Where grief and pride are blent to-day,
Living as when these mother eyes
Beheld them march away.

INDECISION

The barrier of a selfish doubt
Held these two lives apart;
The guile of an unspoken word
Consumed a patient heart.

Had but the waiting hands been joined,
The hovering secret told,
Perchance one had not died alone,
Nor one, alone, grown old.

THE CURE

There is a simple, pretty flower that springs
By field and road with nature's common things,
The whisper of whose name may fitly bear
A message to despair.

Whoe'er thou art that seekest restlessly
Some word occult body and mind to free,
Let my sweet dooryard oracle reveal,
"Self-heal."

IN HER CHAMBER

After life's strenuous fever,
After the passion and pain,
Your joy of living and loving,
Your swiftness of hand and brain,

Here in this ordered room
Where a little south wind sighs,
You lie with inscrutable mouth
And the peace of those deep-sealed eyes.

Your chamber! its simple treasures
But yesterday held so dear,
Are nought to this alien tenant,
Or am I the alien here ?

What then (ah, the ages have questioned!)
Exhales with the final breath ?
And what, be it great or simple,
Is the mystery of death ?

No token, and none replieth,
Your spirit has slipped its bound,
And the spell of an ancient silence
Has folded you thickly round.

The spell of a widening distance
No yearning of love can span,
For the sigh of hearts floats onward
From the lip of man to man.

So I muse on an hour that is coming
When I to such spell must bow,
And mine will be then the silence,
But I shall be dumb — as thou!

MOTHER AND CHILD

“ *Where is the girl that you were?* ” said the child.
And the mother smiled back to her lifted eyes:
“ She lives where the faded violets go
And the old sun shines in the skies.”

“ *Where last year's birds sing last year's songs?* ”
She caught at the fancy, as children will:
“ *If you should meet with the girl that you were,
Do you think you would know her still?* ”

“ I remember her eyes and her waving hair;
I see them now as I look at you.
The girl I was seems often a dream,
While you, my darling, are true! ”

“ *Mothers are better than girls, I think;
They wipe your tears, and find out the pain,
And smile when you smile. Pray don't go back
Though you have the chance again!* ”

“ Ah! there is no fear of that, my sweet.
A mother for evermore and aye
I shall be. We will let the girl that I was
With the faded violets stay.”

ETHEL'S "NIGHT CAP"

"Good by, little Ethel, good by," says the light,
For what does my sleepy one want but the night?
The soft, quiet night, like a great downy wing
To shelter the wee ones too tired to sing.

Good by till the dawning,
Some bright star will keep
Its watch o'er your pillow
When you are asleep.

"Good by, little Ethel," so many things say,—
The wind that has played in the grasses all day,
The pretty red squirrels you never can catch,
The kitten that tries all your playthings to snatch.

When bird, bee, and flower
Their bright eyes must close,
Is Ethel awake? Go to sleep, like a rose!

OVERTHROWN

Before this shrine a woman knelt to pay
Adoring homage many a night and day.
Here burned the subtle incense of a faith
Tireless as love,— like love, more strong than death.
What priceless offerings gathered to this shrine,
Fitting the service of the One Divine!
Life hurried past it on discordant feet,
She held her worship in a safe retreat.

The icy hand of Reason drew at last
The veil illusion round that shape had cast;
And the broad daylight pierced with cruel beam
The twilight stillness of ecstatic dream.
The poor vain idol, stripped of borrowed grace,
Met his stern worshipper with listless face,—
Only an image, clothed and set apart
In the pure cloister of a woman's heart.
“Alas, deluded one!” Nay, rather say,
“This might have been a god which was but clay!”

INSCRIPTION FOR A SUN DIAL

I am a servant of the sun,
A stranger to the dark.
My happy lot is ever thus
The sunlit hours to mark.
Time flies, but Love remains,
Healer of mortal pains.
Love is of life the sun.
When earthly hours are run,
With earthly shadows done
Then love and life are one.

MESSAGE

I have no message to bring;
But I listened yestermorn,
And I heard what the honey-bee said to a rose,
Hiding under a thorn.

I have no message to bring;
But a south wind wandered by,
Telling the love of the meadow lark
For a warm cloud in the sky.

Such fancies, day by day,
Doth the lavish summer bring,
That I half expect my bird to flower,
And my flower to float and sing.

PRESCIENCE

At dawn the hunters are on the track,
And the hounds in full force are flying,
But the rich October air is chill
With a subtle prescience of coming ill
To bird and beast low-lying,
And the bloody crimson that flecks the sky
Is an omen of death,— to the things that must die.

'Tis a hunter who reads the portent true
As he pricks through the tangling moss;
A bough of maple, the cloud's own hue,
As if from one current its life they drew,
Has flaunted his path across.
A swerving steed and the rider's fall,
A deer in her covert saw it all!

PHANTASMAGORIA

At Sunset, July, 1907

I saw the ancient town,
Lifted in golden air,
As if the spells of memory
Had wrought to hold it there.

Nor change of time and loss
The radiant moment knew.
The green graves of my dead were not
In that dissolving view,

But childhood, love, and home,
Familiar household ways,
And faces that were lost to earth
In far receding days.

A moment — and the clouds
Wept for my broken dream;
I stood amid the things that are
And mourned the things that seem!

QUEST

A poet wandered over the world
To gather the threads of song,
He traveled east, he traveled west,
So wearily and so long.

He heard all sounds that poets hear,
He saw what poets see,
But never a message written out
For the waiting world had he.

And sadly in his lonely home
He sat him down at last;
The south wind blew upon his cheek,
A cloud in heaven sailed past,

A robin in the apple tree
Trilled out his jocund mood;
A maiden through the lattice peeped
With eyes that understood

All meanings Love hath ever taught —
Eyes of celestial blue.
She waved a rose; its blushes paled
Beside her fairer hue.

That night the poet wrote his song,
It was a simple lay.
His wayward thought refused to grasp
The strange and far away.

The Rose of Maidens, and the rose
Some power elusive swept
Into the sweetest melody,
That round the wide world crept.

ODE

For a Town Celebration.

We sing the years that pass
Like shadows o'er the grass
 At summer's prime;
We sing of life's deep flow
Of men that come and go,
Their deeds for weal or woe
 Held fast by time.

We reap the harvest sown
By faithful hands unknown,
 Reap fruit or flower;
They feared not fortune's frown,
— The nameless ones — whose crown
Is to have handed down
 This golden hour.

Theirs was the strain and stress
Through thorny wilderness
 A path to win;
By many a stubborn foe
Nobly at last laid low,
Their labors high we know
 Who enter in.

Guard we our sacred trust!
Peace after battle dust
 And learning free.
Secure in homes so fair,
We breathe as common air
The good they might not share,
 Whose sons are we.

Thou to whose boundless thought
The ages are as naught,
 The soul is dear,
Teach us that wisdom true
In which our fathers grew,
The springs of faith renew,
 Teach us thy fear!

ANTICIPATION

Slanting across the fields of snow
The westering sun makes haste to go;
This day, I know, is tried and sweet,
To-morrow tires my lagging feet.

With many a pause of happy rest
I've journeyed with To-Day, my guest;
His stranger brother cannot be,
Methinks, as goodly company,—

Holding in his mysterious hand
Gifts that will bless or blight my land!
Tarry yet longer, fair To-Day,
That boding step an hour delay.

What songs have told my spirit's cheer,
What sunlight warmed the glowing year,
What dear companions round me hung,
While life and love and hope were young!

These with to-morrow fade apace,
Like bloom from a belovèd face;
And trusting half, yet half with dread,
I question, "What shall be instead?"

The sun drops deeper, night is chill;
The oracles I seek are still;
Yon herald star which glitters low
Seems beckoning on the way I go.

To-morrow? Ah, that door doth ope
A new celestial path to Hope.
More than I ask or dream must be,
In God's to-morrow kept for me!

A FAMILY BURYING-GROUND

Hard by the roadway, amid fertile lands,
An alien thing, mute but not voiceless stands.
The fading slates declare, "This pious youth
Despised the world" (and won his heaven, forsooth).
"Prudence was relict of Abijah Lane.
A prudent woman's virtues aye remain."
And "Lovegood Hopkins conquered Mighty Death
When for his country's life he gave his breath."
While later marbles phrase the long regret
That children's children, Death cannot forget.
Once more an open grave. So long ago
Sorrow was past for those who sleep below!
And yet again a sad procession comes
With solemn footstep timed to muffled drums.
Last of his line, by the hoar patriot's side,
They leave the gallant boy, who bravely died
By tropic seas, with purpose high if vain.
Heroic dust meets kindred dust again.

THE PRIDE OF THE FOREST

The creaking teams toil o'er the frozen ground,
Each dragging to the yawning marketplace
Some forest king, felled in his green domain,
And wearing fetters that befit a churl.
My heart yearns over such an one, as if
A mortal body flung from it the soul
When those great limbs writhed, yielded, and were
still.

How is the mighty fallen! alas for thee,
Brought by slow years to an imperial prime
Only to feel man's stern supremacy.

Nor yet unworthy of thy forest pride
The goodly vessel from thy timbers hewn
To sail vast oceans and link sphere with sphere.
Will thy old comrade, the bold winter wind,
Know thee and spare thee for thy fragrant breath
In olden days, when spicy woodlands shook
Balsamic sweetness in his rugged face?

I find within an ancient book set down
The promise of a blessing from the Lord —
The good man shall be even as a tree
Planted by living waters; so allied
And blended in one type forevermore,
Is man full-statured and the kingly tree!
Suddenly, as the tree falls, falleth man,
And Nature mourns such life cut off in haste,
Death still is mystery in tree or man.

LA REINE

She rules in the kingdom of youth.

What queen so fair or so wise ?

A glint of the sun in her hair,

The blue of the sea in her eyes!

Queen, yet with never a care.

She has but to smile when we fling

Our garlands of rose at her feet :

Life is a rose to her spring.

Ah! in the kingdom of youth

Queens there be many and fair,

Crowned for the blue of their eyes,

And a glint of the sun in their hair!

TWO MAJESTIES

(On Gerôme's *Painting* — "*A Lion Facing the
Setting Sun*")

Which first shall yield ? The lidless eye of Light
Flames from beneath the lowering brow of Night;
The desert sky confronts a desert land,
Where low dun waters strike the dun low sand.

But Solitude hath summoned her own king
And reigns beside him like a sentient thing.
His moveless gaze, supreme in conscious power,
Meets undismayed the challenge of the hour.

Infinite spaces feel the creeping dark;
Spellbound the Lion holds his burning mark.
One Majesty must swiftly pale from sight,
While for the other waits the desert Night.

WOMEN OF THE COAST

The sadness of the sea is in their faces,
They move within its charm.
It sweeps from them with high, alluring promise,
Stout heart and manly arm.

Men love it, but their constant women never!
They shun its paths of foam.
Year after year the island wife and mother
Bides in her sheltered home.

She cares not for the great world's power and
fashion,
Its splendor or renown:
Her triumph is when boats come home full-laden,
Her loss, when boats go down.

RECONCILIATION

I came unto that lonely place
Where I had dwelt with Grief erewhile.
How did I tremble to retrace
The way unlit with flower or smile!

But tender twilight reigned around,
Fairer than day's unclouded shine;
Not Grief, but star-eyed Peace, I found,
And owned the ministry divine.

BY A WINTER FIRESIDE

I see, athwart the dimness of the room,
Narcissus buds unfold
Their fragrant hearts of gold,
Shining out mystically through the gloom.
Dear beauty evermore is a surprise
Which the heart waits for as for love; the eyes
Weary of common things,
Feast upon form and tint ;
The tender visions their mute presence brings.

Without, the storm holds undisputed sway.
Hour after hour the snow,
Massing its forces as against a foe,
Has mounted walls and fences all the day.
The swooping spirits of the wind combine
To bow the stateliest pine;
The lilac's feathery bloom
Of snowflakes, sliding falls;
Unstirred this frail Narcissus charms my room.

What vibrant chord is thrilled
By the delicious breath
Of life 'mid seeming death,
Pulsating warm when springing founts are stilled ?
It speaks of forces that forever tend
Through rack and ruin to a peaceful end
Immutably, the while
The storm-swept earth's dismay
Yields to the summer's hush and harvest's smile.

THE SECRET OF THE BROOK

The great sea called me, and I came
From the far hillside bleak and brown;
And many grateful blessings meet
The twinkle of my silver feet,
As I pass singing, singing, down.

The happy birds my waters drink,
The mosses grow so velvet green
If I but touch them; at my brink,
The pastured cattle stand and — think!
And life is still a shifting scene.

I spend my wealth for others' good,
And thus, in turn, their best I take,
The wind delights with every mood.
Sun, storm, or quiet o'er me brood,
And each a newer charm doth make.

My errand will not let me stay
In any spot, though fair it be;
Even while you watch I slip away,
By day and night, by night and day,
To add my ripple to the sea,
Which even needs a brook like me.

IN REMEMBRANCE

"Alieni temporis flores"

The mellow moon, which set so long ago,
Still shines in memory on the college green,
And still the dancers weaving to and fro
Lend their enchantment to the fairy scene.

The waltz its poignant sweetness sends to meet
The flowery sweetness of the summer night.
On dappled paths the loitering passers greet,
Moving from light to shade, from shade to light.

I note your form of rare ethereal grace
Swaying so softly in your lover's arms,
Your starry eyes, the whole uplifted face
As in a vision of dissolving charms.

Nathless, my fair one, fair so long ago,
I would not question of your after time;
Part of the glamorous night, I leave you so,
With but the vagrant incense of my rhyme.

JACK,— A REMINISCENCE

Were I an artist I would try my hand
At sketching Jack, the Corporal. Understand
He was no kith of mine; a neighbor's lad,
But we all owned him! every one was glad
When the bright face and ringing voice went by;
He carried with him springtime and blue sky.

The war cry burst. Those guns at Sumter took
Our drowsy town; like leaves from an old book
A puff of air has seized and flung about,
The wind of battle shook our sleepers out.
They braced up stiffly in the startled street,
As when a breeze blows back again bent wheat.

The love of country in a moment born,
Rose to a passion in men's souls that morn;
My neighbor's lad threw his free boyhood back,
As 'twere a weight in the keen runner's track,
And mother arms refused to bind the feet
That pressed impatiently their goal to greet.

O Jack, my Corporal! how could I let go
Your clasping hands, so cruel was the foe?
While I, a cripple, barred my true estate;
Measured the world through Fortune's welded
gate,
Denied in valiant deeds all outward part,
With you I gave the life blood of my heart.

At the last moment Jack to me had said,
Tossing the fair locks on his shapely head:
“Death is so glorious in the stirring fight;
To die of sickness as a weakling might
Were to waste breath. But so I shall not die!”
The glowing cheek, the clear undaunted eye
Strengthened denial more than words of cheer,
And left me comforted despite of fear.

There’s a street corner where I often see
Through Memory’s glass, a marching company
File through the ranks of proudly cheering friends
To a small station, where the vision ends
As the huge sinuous train goes thundering on,
Till waving hands and yearning looks are gone.

You read my tale? There was no fight for him
Save with the fever; senses all aswim,
With broken speech of home; the tented plain,
Drifting and changing like the tides of pain,
Then the long sighing breath that told surcease,
The campaign ended, and the unsought peace.

Full thirty years ago! And they will lay
Wreaths on the mound as on your burial day,
When gathered comrades sang, “How sleep the
brave,”

With voices strong as if across the grave
They heard still others from the fields of Light,
And knew our lad had won, not lost, the fight!

BETWEEN WORLDS

He holds them safe within his heaven,
Friendships by death transported there.
Why should the purest feeling given
Die out upon its native air?

Friend after friend, like flower on flower,
He takes; the heavenly Gardener knows
When rounds the bright consummate hour
For which each plant of being grows.

This, lifted in its sturdy pride;
That, sorely bent by storm and sun,—
Are they not planted side by side,
When souls that meet in Him are one?

Oh, paint me not a world wherein
Memory shall play no blissful part!
Blot out Life's curse of woe and sin,
But leave the power of heart on heart.

Too strange and cold the faith that spares
No mortal tie to souls set free;
Love a diviner instinct shares,
And feels them close who dwell with Thee.

DAY BY DAY

For common gifts we bless thee, Lord —
The hearing ear, the eye to see
Beauty forever round us poured
In sweet and varied ministry.

We bless thee for the wholesome air,
For showers that fall and suns that warm,
Darkness, and the long truce to care
Sleep brings with many a soothing charm.

For gentle courtesies of life,
For dear communion, friend with friend,
Those hours with sacred meaning rife,
When love looks to no earthly end.

We yield thee praise for sovereign power
That steadies us o'er gulfs of pain.
Shall we forget thee in the hour
That leads us back to strength again ?

Let not our gratitude delay
Till good withheld constrains the prayer.
Give clearer vision, that we may
Hold common blessings as if rare.

“WHEN CHRISTMAS BELLS ARE RINGING”

In the name of the blessed Child,
A blessing on children all!
On children gentle and wild,
Whatever their color or race,
The fair and the swarthy face,
In cottage and tent and hall.

Lo, children are everywhere,
Like snowflakes in the air,
And the wide, wide, world is bound
By small hands meeting round.
For them are the joy-bells rung,
For them have the angels sung
How Love to this world was born
In the shape of a Child — that morn!

Thus under the Christmas star,
Young voices from near and far
Are chanting the golden strains
That swelled over Bethlehem's plains.

*“Glory to God in the highest!
Peace to men of good will.”*
But the loving child is nighest
The kingdom of Jesus still.

VESPERS

O Shadow in a sultry land!
We gather to thy breast,
Whose love enfolding like the night
Brings quietude and rest,
Glimpse of the fairer life to be,
In foretaste here possessed!

From aimless wanderings we come,
From drifting to and fro;
The wave of being mingles deep
Amid its ebb and flow;
The grander sweep of tides serene
Our spirits yearn to know!

That which the garish day had lost,
The twilight vigil brings,
While softer the vesper bell
Its silver cadence rings,—
The sense of an immortal trust,
The brush of angel wings!

Drop down behind the solemn hills,
O Day, with golden skies!
Serene above its fading glow,
Night, starry crowned, arise!
So beautiful may heaven be,
When life's last sunbeam dies!

G. T. P.

Oct. 19, 1905.

How tenderly that mellow autumn day
The bright leaves drifted down.
Nature was fain upon your bier to lay
The year's imperial crown.

A peaceful conqueror, on the arid plain
Where many taste defeat.
Bravely you met the sullen hordes of pain
And left them in retreat.

Your spirit, like a bird above its cage,
Rose singing from the bars.
Anguish and baffled hope cannot engage
A soul among the stars!

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